



AUUMM Annual Meeting 2025

Saturday, July 26, 2025; 9:30-10:30 EST

<https://zoom.us/j/303400075>

Passcode : AUUMM

AGENDA

- I. Opening Music**
- II. Chalice Lighting**
- III. Call to business** - Laura Weiss, Moderator
- IV. Approval of [2024 Annual Meeting Minutes](#)**-Deborah Weiner, Secretary
- V. Remarks from President of Unitarian Universalist Association** Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt
- VI. Moderator's Report** - Laura Weiss
- VII. Treasurer's Report** - Matt Meyer
- VIII. Executive Administrator Report** - Allison King
- IX. President's Report** - Jen Hayman
- XI. Conference Planning Committee Report** - Yvonne DuVal
- XII. Music Leadership Certification Committee:** Markus Hauck
- XIII. Election** John Ector, *Nominating Committee 2026-2028*

XIV. Recognition of Retiring Music Professionals - Jen Hayman

XV. Recognition of Volunteers - Laura Weiss

XVI. Closing Meditation-Bran Lennox

XVII. Adjourn

AUUMM Annual Reports 2025

Prepared and Respectfully submitted by the 2025

AUUMM Board of Trustees

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Jen Hayman, President

*“When the world is sick, can’t no one be well, but I dreamt we was all beautiful and strong.”
-Thee Silver Mount Zion Orchestra*

I would venture that most of us are familiar enough with air travel to have heard the flight attendant’s spiel: “in the event of an emergency, please first put your own mask on before attempting to help others.” This phrase has also been adopted by so many self-care advocates, it’s almost become trite. Yet here we are, still trying to take care of ourselves while the need to help care for others has become increasingly obvious, urgent, and necessary. All the while, the plane is still flying through the atmosphere at warp speed with plenty of turbulence, without a safe landing in sight.

When I welcomed you all to Albuquerque last year, the AUUMM board and I were in the throes of putting AUUMM's emergency oxygen mask on. An almost entirely new board and new administrator were trying to re-establish our financial house, re-secure our non-profit status, and re-align the values of our leadership so that we could move forward in clarity, courage and care. It's not always a smooth ride, but at least it feels like we can breathe again. The organization is back in a stable place, which has allowed us to begin to pursue some bigger questions about how we, as an organization, will better serve this faith, how we will better engage and take care of our members, how to support and empower music leaders who can meet this tender moment with the boldness it requires. We might finally be in a place where we can help others with their oxygen masks, too.

How will we repair?

Years of slow or stunted communication with our organization put a strain on several important denominational relationships and limited our involvement in several big conversations happening at the denominational level. This year, we've been trying to honor our seats at these tables by being more present and involved in these conversations while trying to repair the personal relationships that were strained. This has led to repair conversations with those involved with the creation of the Sing Out Love virtual hymnal, the Music Leadership Certification Committee (MLCC), and the General Assembly Planning Committee (GAPC). We have worked to establish better channels of communication with each of these groups, allowing them time to report on their work and/or seek AUUMM support at our monthly board meetings. We realize that repair takes time, but we are committed to being present and open to the possibilities ahead, and loosening the narratives of the past. We continue to try to move in alignment with our [covenant](#), which we established last year as a board, prioritizing progress over perfection.

How will we lead?

Forbes Magazine recently published a study indicating that formal volunteering is at the lowest rate it's been in over three decades, and sadly, AUUMM is not an exception. As fewer people are signing up to help support or lead, we are forced to consider how this impacts AUUMMs operations, as an organization powered by only one paid staff person and a lot of good will. We are learning to work *smarter* and not harder to shine a light on good, right-sized efforts already happening, and to meet the moment in spaces where there's energy and enthusiasm.

In January, we welcomed Anderson Manuel as a trustee at-large to our AUUMM board and Olga Martinez to the Nominating Committee. Both of them have been wonderful additions to our leadership. However, we have begun to recognize some challenges to the onboarding and nominating timelines, and we are currently assessing a nominating and voting schedule that would allow AUUMM leadership to cycle on in a season that better aligns with the church calendar, ideally in July (before the start of each program year) rather than in January. This aligns with the term cycles of the other UU professional organizations and would allow new

leadership to cycle on at the same time of year: an increasingly important effort as more collaboration is prioritized between these organizations. In the coming months, we will be working closely with the Nominating Committee so they can better understand the needs of the board and the working model we are living into, with clearer roles for our trustees at-large.

Over the course of this year, we have identified a need for more opportunities for peer-to-peer community, connection and sharing. Trustee Bran Lennox will be working with our administrator to help establish more opportunities for connection throughout the year and beyond the conference. We've learned of so much work that is already happening that is not always visible to our full member body, especially in the realm of education and professional development. Trustee Anderson Manuel will be working to amplify existing educational opportunities across our denomination and to synergize with new efforts happening internally with AUUMM. This will mean our website and social media will be more active with news and announcements so please stay tuned and check back often! As I mentioned previously, there is a significant effort among UU professional organizations to develop shared systems of accountability and conflict resolution. While I will be involved in those conversations on a denominational level, we will also be working to revive, recruit for and formally reinstate our Good Officers program. Trustee Rev. Verdis Robinson will be monitoring these efforts within AUUMM and helping connect our members to the support they may need.

At the conclusion of last year's conference, we bid a loving and grateful farewell to our long-time conference planning co-chairs, Bea Ann Phillips and Julie Enersen. This offered us an opportunity to build a role for a pair of super-volunteers (emphasis on the *super*) to steer the conference planning process for two years, the second of which would involve on-boarding the next pair of super-volunteer leaders. I offer *tremendous* gratitude to rev. theresa rohlck and Yvonne Duval for their work this year, in addition to the ongoing efforts of our fabulous administrator, Allison King, and our conference site host, Donald Milton. I'm also thrilled that we have successfully initiated hiring an AV specialist, Mike Halerz of the UU Congregation of Ann Arbor, who will travel with us and liaise with on-site AV teams to make sure our tech experience continues to be refined and well coordinated. Aaaaaaand this amazing team has already secured our 2026 conference site, too! But more on that soon.

How will we grow?

We celebrate the work of our amazing colleagues, GA Music Coordinator Natasha Steinmacher, UUMA Ministry Days co-directors and coordinators, Laura Weiss and I, GA band leader Carl Kennedy, and GA choir director Verdis Robinson, on the completion of a successful on-site General Assembly in Baltimore this past June. I met with these musicians and coordinators as well as past GA/Ministry Days music coordinators, ensemble directors, and band leaders earlier this month to make recommendations for continued improvement and refinement to the current arrangements for music support and staffing, and to advocate for a full-time UUA music staff position beginning in FY 26-27. This effort builds on the work of former AUUMM boards to build parity, respect and equity for UU music ministry professionals that is needed by our congregations. As recruitment for each of these roles becomes increasingly challenging for a

variety of reasons, we acknowledge the need for significant changes to this system are needed, and needed soon. See [here](#) some of our shared experiences and recommendations.

On behalf of AUUMM, in March, I attended a gathering at UUA headquarters to discuss widening the pathway to ministry. The purpose of this gathering was to begin a renewed process of removing barriers and increasing equity in the process of ministerial formation and credentialing, and to create a foundation for this long-term work in accountable dialogue with a range of stakeholders. My focus was on making sure that music ministry is valued as a vital ministry for thriving congregations, and continuing to caution against the dangers of diminishing these positions as congregations struggle to make difficult budgetary decisions. I was also delighted that there was much talk about how music leaders/music ministers might have opportunities to audit certain classes in UU-identified seminaries as professional development in their work. Please note that this was a preliminary conversation in a project in its infancy, but I am excited about what's to come.



Image created from our discussions at Widening the Pathway to Ministry gathering

The Grief, the Gratitude, and the Future

Whenever I gather with a group of UUs anywhere, I am still looking for Amanda Thomas' smiling face. While I was never especially close to Amanda on a personal level, I miss her terribly. I miss her leadership, and her courage to say the hard things. I miss her tenacity, as someone who could critique but still love this faith despite all its flaws. I miss her spirit: she made me want to be better: better at loving my colleagues. Better at honoring the songs of my own heart. Better at mentoring the next generation of music leaders. For me, Amanda was like a North Star among us: a light that always, *always*, stayed true to herself.

Amanda used to post videos on social media of herself driving around and blasting gospel music in her car. I remember in one video, Hezekiah Walker's "Grateful" is the soundtrack. Amanda is driving slowly back to her house, and our vantage point is through the front windshield of her car. She is appreciating the flowers in her neighbor's yards, various homes of friends, her own front door and how lucky she is to live where she lives, to come home to someone she loves...a true savoring of her life. An imperfect and beautiful life: not unlike mine, and probably not unlike yours.

Friends, we are definitely still in turbulence. The flight crew is scared, and there's no promise of blue skies ahead. However, perhaps we can take some time to look out the window and appreciate all that remains: be it the colleagues that have picked us up when we were down; or this faith, with all its overdue promise; or the beauty of this art we get to create with and for so many we love. Let us strive to be beautiful and strong. Let us remember to care for one another.

I'll close with one of my favorite poems, by hanna maverick cruz:

HAIKU FROM A PLANE OVER THE OCEAN

*Sunday disappears
Somewhere over the vast blue
Of the Pacific.*

*The air in Taipei
Smells like green, woody and rich
Thickened with living*

*I watch the sun rise
The clouds glow pink and orange
Above the city*

*How lucky we are
To still be here, in the fight
To be not-yet-gone*

*God, if you exist:
I think I'd like to thank you
For life. For my life.*

Yours in service,
Jen Hayman
President, AUUMM

MODERATOR'S REPORT

Laura Weiss, Moderator

Each moment that we are gifted to be together in this community is holy. You are the members that we are called to serve and your needs, joys, concerns, and deeply human experiences have been your board's number one priority. While we have worked to right the ship financially and structurally, we have also strived this year to rebuild relationships within our AUUMM community and with our sibling UU organizations. There have been many instances in this past year that your board has experienced deep and profound belly laughing, challenging yet not insurmountable problems, as well as clarity for where this organization is headed next.

I cannot say enough how valuable your President, Jen Hayman, has been to this team and to AUUMM. I will say it again and again 10,000 times. Her gentle wisdom, kind heart, and willing spirit have quickly restored this space to one of a hopeful "yes we can". Your treasurer, Matt Meyer, who you heard speak from the heart at the invitation to the offering on Thursday, has not only brought us back to fiscal health but goes well beyond by researching scholarships, grants, financial opportunities, and creative ways to grow our organization. He does so with all of you at the center of soul and mind. We have benefitted tremendously by the work of your board secretary, Deb Weiner. She brings organizational wisdom to this team and a pragmatic approach to every situation. One of our favorite things about Deb is that her meeting minutes include action items off to the side to keep us honest between gatherings. Bran Lennox, Verdis Robinson, and Anderson Manual each in their own way have provided unique perspectives, loving guidance, and thoughtful solutions. Your board, simply put, is thriving.

We have learned from our tremendous super volunteers throughout AUUMM that there are some really excellent things in our community. Between education opportunities, the revamping of your good officers, the addition of our superhero administrator Allison, and more, we are radiating joyful and important work. We may be a little foggy at the edges still, but the essence of AUUMM is strong. While the program model crafted years ago was promising, we have had to work to the actual scale of our capacity. We are a small professional organization with very part-time employees. This means that we have to work organically and with the energies and passions that motivate each of you. Rather than work top-down, and when looking at our work through a lens of emergent strategy, we have found that, once moving from a state of emergency into repair, we have needed to stay nimble and also put the members back at the top of our organizational chart.

Our goals for the coming year continue to be guided by a desire to engage the community in conversation, clarifying *your needs*, discovering what *inspires* and *motivates* you, and learning what is *hard*. Because of this, we have now clarified our three at-large board roles to focus on member engagement through communications, member connections through peer to peer relationship, and member support through

our good officer program.

There is much for us to learn from you and even more for us to do than there will be enough hours for. But, you are the inspiration and motivation for our work. We are honored to serve the mission of AUUMM and humbled by your faith in us to serve. I wish you all an imaginative and fulfilling year in your music ministries. It is time now that we thrive, friends. It is time.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Matt Meyer, Treasurer

Overview of the last 8 years

What matters more than the current number in our bank account, is the direction we're headed and it seems we're headed in a positive direction. Last year was the first year that we ended with a surplus since covid.

2024 Final Balance Sheet

(Where are we as of 12/31/24)

Totals assets: \$217,971

Total *increase* of \$26,201 in 2024

We budgeted for a loss of \$10,821. So our actuals were \$34,093 better than budgeted.

2024 Final Profit & Loss

(What happened during 2024)

3 Income areas make up almost all of our budget: Dues, Investments, Conference Registration

Here's the budget to actuals for the three biggies.

Line Item	Budget	Actuals
Investments	\$5,000	\$30,055
Members Dues	\$45,000	\$31,934
Conference profit/loss	\$10,000	\$43,374

Current 2025 budget

We're budgeting for a loss this year of -\$6,720.

What can you do to help AUUMM survive and thrive into the future?

#1. Come back to the conference and bring a team of musicians, including choir members, band musicians, your minister, and other singers.

#2. Ask for AUUMM dues and conference fees to be included in your professional expenses.

#3. Ask your congregation to share the offering with AUUMM on music Sunday.

#4. Make a personal donation if you're able.

EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Allison King, Executive Administrator

Membership Numbers

Membership Type	July 2021	July 2022	July 2023	July 2024	July 2025
Regular I 1.0 FTE	19	24	28	20 (11 exp)	20
Regular II .75 FTE to <1.0 FTE	14	18	22	18 (5 exp)	20
Regular III .5 FTE to <.75 FTE	36	57	62	78 (25 exp)	66
Regular IV <.5 FTE or unpaid	124	133	129	147 (47 exp)	128
Supporting					
Honorary Lifetime				4	4
Lifetime	9	10	11	7	11
Team	31	38	45	51 (14 exp)	47
Professional	23	30	45	53 (18 exp)	37
Associate	37	34	33	49 (18)	37

				exp)	
Affiliate	46	58	48	62 (25 exp)	35
Totals	339	402	423	340/489	405

2025 Organization Highlights

MEMBERSHIP

- The biggest news is that we changed our membership platform, which was a pretty big shift. The general consensus is that the membership platform is fine, but the website aspect needs help. The tech support has been lacking, and the event management, which was one of the reasons that we went with Glue Up, has also been problematic, and not what was promised. We have 4 months left on our contract to decide if we want to renew or cut our losses and go elsewhere.
- Membership numbers are up! We were at 340 last year, now we're over 400. The goal was to get to 500 this year, but we did manage to welcome back quite a few folks whose memberships had lapsed. We had 6 workshops and had 120 attendees, and that's just since we switched to Glue Up. I don't have the records for the old system.
- NEW members : 90 so far this year, up from 57 last year
- We met with a web designer to see if we could work with the current system to get everything that we need on the site, and to have it be attractive and intuitive. If we don't renew with Glue Up, we will most likely revert to our original plan to design something in Word Press which usually can integrate into other membership systems.

CONFERENCE

- Conference: 221 registrants as of today: 173 In-person members, (21 more than last year) 54 of which are first time attendees; 12 in-person non-members, 5 of which are first-timers; 21 virtual members, with 5 first-timers; 2 virtual non-members with 1 first-timer; 9 guests, 3 Two Day passes, and 1 One Day passes.

FINANCES

- Doing better, but Quickbooks is an ongoing struggle for proper assignment of charges.
- Oregon tax situation is resolved, although Oregon seems unaware of that fact.
- I have full authority and control over the bank accounts now.

2025 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Yvonne Duval & rev. theresa rohlck -Conference Co-Chairs

Last July, we were asked to fill the roles that Bea Ann Phillips and Julie Enersen had filled for many years. We agreed to co-chair that conference, along with Allison King whose administrative duties were increased. With the addition of the new position of tech consultant, Mike Halerz, we are pleased with the outcome and hope you are as well. We have a TON to learn, but the journey thus far has been rewarding. We are so grateful to be here in Atlanta, lovingly hosted by staff and members of UUCA and the incredible Don Milton.

We continued with the previous years' model of the Conference Planning Committee, with program specific team leads. This year's conference would not be at all possible without the hours of intense work and dedication of these individuals. A huge thank you to:

Natasha Steinmacher and Paul Winchester, our Worship Co-Coordinators

Matt Meyer, Song Leaders Convergence and Marketing Team Lead

Keith Arnold and Mignon Dobbins, Choral Rep Co-Coordinators

Carl Kennedy, Worship Bands Lead

Donald Milton III, local host

Mike Halerz, tech extraordinaire

Allison King, administrator

We want to acknowledge the labor of love they poured into the conference and to past leaders who made it possible for others to carry on the torch.

The CPC also made sure there were social events to attend. Some of these included the Open Mlc Night, and the Worship Band Jam; we made sure Chaplains were present and available; we provided quiet space as well as caucus space for BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ members and we collaborated to find an inspiring plenary speaker.

Thank you to each of you, for not just attending this conference, whether in this physical space or virtually, but for also sharing your immense talents as workshop presenters, worship leaders, songleaders, pastoral caregivers, furniture movers, and so much more. Our entire AUUMM organization, and this conference specifically, is literally not possible without each and every one of us volunteering our time and sharing our gifts. Thank you.